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From the Editor ...

The following is condensed from Dr. Harmon's remarks at the 2003 General Convention.

This isn't a debate about who is included; Christ invites and includes all people. This isn't a debate about pastoral care — the church's living out her theology in practices that vary depending on the circumstances. There is a distinction between orientation and practice that has to be kept in mind. People have urges, inclinations, and desires but we need to distinguish between having them and acting on them. This is about the call of God to his church and its leadership to be holy as God is holy.

Primarily this is a controversy about the Bible. At issue are not just a few individual passages, as is often alleged, but the broad structure of the biblical narrative which flows from the primordial couple in the Garden of Eden through the Song of Solomon to the celebration of an undefiled marriage bed in the New Testament. The Bible's positive teaching on marriage is that it is intended by God to be a "one flesh" union which embraces the complementarity of the two sexes.

Based on this positive teaching, the Scriptures are also very clear that homosexual behavior is a violation of God's purpose for sex. As Robert Gagnon explains: "Same-sex intercourse" represents "a structurally incongruous attempt at merging sexually with a sexual same, with someone who" is "not a gender complement, and therefore not a person that could bring completion in the sphere of sexual relations to the sexual self." This is the teaching of the Old and New Testaments: there is no tension, no qualification, no development, and no equivocation.

Not only is the Bible at stake, but the church's whole theology of marriage. Traditionally, marriage was understood to have four purposes, communion (joy shared is doubled, sorrow is halved), union (the two shall become one flesh), procreation (be fruitful and multiply), and prevention (marriage was

actually understood to prevent sin). A same sex union cannot be unitive, the bodies do not fit together in their design. It is unable to be procreative. Whatever else is being called for by General Convention, it is not marriage. This is seen in the rhetoric of the resolution. It is only clear what these couplings are not – marriage – but what they are is not clearly defined.

As if this isn't enough, there are three more matters which make this resolution so crucial. Everyone here knows that the questions raised by THIS resolution are inextricably intertwined with the vote on the New Hampshire election. But the questions raised here are the ones which must be settled before the liturgies can be developed and therefore the relationships can be approved. If Gene Robinson is confirmed by General Convention, it would bring through the back door a practice that the Episcopal Church has never agreed to approve through the front door. If we do that, it will be an end run around the debate before the debate itself has been settled. It will be a process in the name of justice and integrity which has neither justice nor integrity.

If this passes, it will shatter the Episcopal Church. A noted rector in Boston said it would cause "significant splitting." A group of clergy in the diocese of Connecticut said it will "increase the descent deeper and deeper into chaos" in the American Episcopal Church. The consequences in the Anglican Communion will be similarly disastrous. Already a significant number of Primates, representing the population of more than half of the Anglican Communion, have made clear that this step is utterly unacceptable in their eyes. To lose our communion with them, in the words of Rowan Williams, "would impoverish us as a Church in every way." It is time to break through the veneer of what may be an air of unreality at this General Convention, and tell ourselves the truth. I applaud the Presiding Bishop for saying, "unawareness is a form of bondage," and I am concerned about precisely that unawareness.

It is a caricature to say that

to speak of the church shattering is to use a threat. That is untrue. Think this through. A woman who has been in a marriage for some time discovers her husband is having an emotional affair. There are letters, emails, secret liaisons and the like and she stumbles onto them. Then in a moment of great courage, she summons her strength and confronts her husband. She gets him to admit the truth. Then she looks him squarely in the eye and says, "If you consummate that relationship our love will be shattered." Now the husband can think to himself, "she is trying to control me by threat," but we all know it is nothing of the kind— it is instead a loving warning. And please note carefully the husband can also say, "If you choose to go that is your choice, you will be the one responsible," but that is untrue. And the husband also can say, "Look dear as long as we keep going to the dinner table together and loving each other we can work this out," — and that is untrue. The husband can even say, "the relationship hasn't been severed during previous difficulties, so it will not now," and that, too, is false. If the husband goes through with the affair it is the husband who is responsible for the marriage break up — that is the reality. Please, please let us tell ourselves the truth.

Finally, I believe the gospel itself is at stake in this debate. Robert Gagnon puts it forcefully: "Ultimately it is the individual homosexual who suffers in his or her relationship to God when the church shirks its duty to call a sin a sin. Far from being an unloving act, a sensitive refusal to condone homosexual conduct is the responsible and loving thing to do. The church deceives the homosexual by affirming a lifestyle that God deems to be sin. It is a nice, easy way out. No one is offended, the arguments go away, the tension dissipates — all at the "minimal" cost of forestalling the redemptive work of Christ." Let us take the higher road, the call of holy love, let us embrace the gospel of repentance and transformation, the gospel which has at its center not

human affirmation but Christ's redeeming suffering on the Cross.

– KSH+

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PREGNANT with PROMISE

In the wondrous mystery of the incarnation, the first coming of Christ, there is a new creation. The Word of God put on flesh and dwelt among us. Everything was changed because He pitched his tent among us, became one of us. And yet the story does not end with the first coming - with the birth of Sweet Baby Jesus over whom shone the bright star. No, that's only the infancy, so to speak, of the new creation.

In another sense, it's always Advent! Christ came in space and time, came as a helpless child some 2000 years ago – but he continues to come to us, to the Church, to the World. His light continues to shine in the darkness of our own hearts, in the dark places of the Church, in the pitch-black corners of our world. So we believe. We long for God without ceasing. We hope.

Recall what Paul wrote about hope: *Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we don't see, we wait for it with patience. (Romans 8:24-25).*

We wait, as a pregnant woman waits. We wait as Mary waited, brimming full of the promise of God. We wait for the promise of mercy, justice, love, healing, of belonging to the Holy Family. The promise that was to ripen in the fullness of time. It would bloom resplendent with the birth of Jesus, his ministry, his passion, death and resurrection. Over time, it continues to blossom and unfold, to be born in us. The Word is enfleshed again and again within and among the Body of Christ.

– The Rev. Celeste O. Cox, Bethesda-by-the-Sea, Bethesda, Maryland

Encountering God Incarnate

Not long ago I was in Armenia for a meeting between bishops and theologians of the Anglican Communion and of the Oriental Orthodox churches, the ancient Christian churches. The Church of England has long and close relations with these Churches, which have spread to a diaspora in the Western world, and our meeting was the first of an official dialogue to work towards a deeper unity and closer relations.

These ancient Churches were the result of one of the earliest Christian divisions, a division in the 5th century concerning the nature of Christ, though political and cultural factors played a part. These were all Christian communities on the fringe of, or beyond, the Eastern Roman Empire. The Council of Chalcedon in AD 451, which spoke of two natures in Christ, was not accepted by these Churches. Their understanding was shaped by the teaching of St. Cyril of Alexandria, who said that in Christ there was "one nature of the incarnate Word of God." For these Churches, the language of two natures, divinity and humanity, seemed to come dangerously close to a schizoid Christ, keeping God at a distance.

In recent decades ecumenical conversations have gone a long way to resolving this ancient difference of understanding. We rejoiced that in our meeting Anglicans and Oriental Orthodox were able to agree a common statement on our understanding of Christ, and reach out to heal what is one of the most ancient Christian divisions.

What was at issue was whether Christ was a supernatural being but not fully God, or, as the Nicene Creed was to confess, he was fully and completely God. The ancient debates about the person of Christ have something of the same character, the point at issue being the unity of the person of Christ, the reality of his human nature and, centrally, the affirmation that God gave himself fully

and completely into our human condition.

In a world in which Platonist philosophy spoke of a God remote from the flux and change of history, the Christian affirmation of the incarnation, of God taking human nature, was bound to be offensive. The struggles of the early Church with the nature of Christ are, in the end, struggles to say that the God with whom we have to do is a God who does not stand aside from his creation, but, in the words of the Lady Julian of Norwich, "comes down to the very lowest part of our need."

In Christ God freely chooses to know our humanity from the inside. In Jesus we encounter no less than God incarnate. That is the radical, wonderful and challenging reality that is at the heart of the Christian faith.

The remote, distant and uninvolved God, repudiated in the theological battles of the early Church, is always in danger of creeping back. The deists of the 18th century, who turned God into the abstraction of a first cause, setting the Universe going and then remaining all but absent from it, is but one instance of this. It is often such a God who is denied by atheists and tilted at by critics. But that is not the Christian God, who is uniquely revealed and known in Christ.

In a few weeks we shall celebrate at Christmas that self-giving of God, and will sing the praise of that love which goes to the uttermost. A few weeks ago when the Church celebrated the Feast of Christ the King, the king we honored and praised is the one who embodies that same love, a king whose kingdom is a kingdom of justice, love and peace.

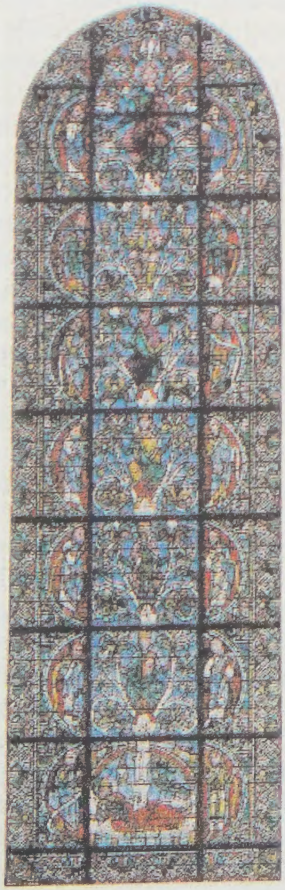
To live the life of that kingdom is the Christian calling, a calling made possible by the one who came down to where we are that we might be exalted to share in his life.

—The Rt. Rev. Geoffrey Rowell, Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe

JESSE TREE

Christians from the beginning have drawn a line of connection between the hope of Israel and Christian faith; between the Covenant that God made with Abraham and the new Covenant in Jesus Christ. The New Testament exists in large part to establish this claim. The theological assertion of connection and fulfillment has been accompanied (like all good theology) by its artistic expression.

The 12th century Royal Portal at the West Door of Chartres Cathedral, with its figures of the kings and queens of ancient Israel, is a rather good (and famous) example. The serene and sculptured figures of the Portal clearly express the belief that Christian faith has roots, in God's covenant with the Jews.



A little bit closer to home in Advent is the concept of the Jesse Tree. I'm thinking of the medieval Jesse window at Dorchester Abbey, in Oxfordshire, England; but of course there are others elsewhere (even a quite beautiful one at Chartres itself). In a Jesse window, the figures from the history of salvation are arrayed on a "tree" that grows from the recumbent figure of King David's father Jesse. "*A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots*" (Is. 11:1) provided the imaginative clue that linked David, Solomon, and the Virgin Mary to Christ himself. In

the Jesse window, prophets and angels stand by, testifying that Jesus is the One who was promised, the One who was to come.

Advent is the season in which the voices of prophets are heard once again, and we are invited to redraw the line of connection between Israel and the Church. God prepared over many generations, over many centuries, for the coming of the Messiah. He chose a People and a Family to bring salvation into the world. The Church, to borrow St. Paul's metaphor, has been *"grafted in"* (Rom.11:17) to that family. We are not the predecessors of Christ, like the folks on the Jesse Tree, but his inheritors, *"heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ"*(Rom. 8:17). All of this comes through the incarnation of the Word for which Advent prepares us, and his death and resurrection.

– The Rev. John C. Bauerschmidt, D. Phil., Christ Church, Covington, Louisiana

WHAT'S RELIGIOUS ABOUT HARRY POTTER?

The answer to the above question is plenty! Detractors of the Harry Potter books highlight its necromancy and wizardry while neglecting to detect its religious plot lines and noble characters.

In the opening novel, *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, Harry, Hermione, and Ron battle devil's snare, warlike chess pieces, and secure a key to the inner chamber. Harry wants to protect the stone – not use it. The motif of Fluffy, the three-headed dog, is straight out of Greek mythology (Cerberus is the three-headed canine that guards the portal to Hades). The gate key, access to a new world, and the warning about 'Cerberean mouths' are right out of John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Book II.

However, Harry and his cohorts, unlike Milton's Satan, are willing to sacrifice their lives to preserve truth. There is no greater religious and heroic act a man or woman can do than to offer to lay down their life for another.

The second novel, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, features a similar motif of self-sacrifice. Harry rescues Ginny Weasley from the clutches of Voldemort and, like St. George and King Arthur, slays the dreaded beast. The sword Harry snatches from under the Sorting Hat is Rowling's tribute to young Arthur in T. H. White's *The Sword and the Stone*.

Sirius Black, the wrongly accused, supposed villain of *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, is rescued by the fearsome threesome via the flying Hippogriff. Harry, Hermione, and Ron are ministering angels who free Black from his lofty tower prison room.

Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire features a concluding scene in Headmaster Albus Dumbledore's Hogwarts Castle room where Fawkes the Phoenix's tears miraculously heal Harry's wounded leg and Dumbledore proclaims how well-pleased he is with Harry's overcoming of Voldemort. The 'trinity' of Dumbledore, Harry, and Fawkes clearly parallels the Christian Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Holding a degree in Classical Literature from the University of Exeter, J. K. Rowling clearly knows her mythology, medieval legend, and Bible. My favorite reference, to date, is Rowling's use of Sir Thomas Browne's seventeenth-century treatise, *Vulgar Errors*, which contains separate chapters on the Phoenix, Gryphins, Mandrakes, Unicorns, and the Basilisk. Browne, the foremost prose writer in British literature of the time, was a physician and theologian. He incorporates myth and religion just as skillfully as his successor, Rowling, does.

As one reads the Harry Potter novels, including the newly-released *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*, it might do all of us well to peruse some of the myths, religious themes, and medieval legends that Ms. Rowling knows and uses so well.

— Bill McCarron,
Epiphany, Commerce, Texas

Christmas in Greccio, 1223

Keeping Christ in Christmas amid the sometimes crass commercialism of the season is not a new challenge. In 1223, Francis of Assisi took up the challenge and gave us a cherished tradition.

What Francis wanted to do was help people "see with our bodily eyes ..: what [Jesus] suffered for lack of the necessities of a newborn Babe and how he in lay in a manger between an ox and an ass." So, with the help of his friend, landowner Giovanni Velita, Francis constructed a manger, filled it with hay, and brought in an ox and an ass from a local farm.

Then Francis and his brothers extended an invitation to all the people of the town to come to the manger on Christmas Eve. Lights were kindled, songs and hymns were sung, and Mass was celebrated in the manger itself, with Francis singing the Gospel of Christ's birth. Francis then preached about the birth of the poor King, the Babe of Bethlehem. Simplicity was honored, poverty exalted, humility praised.

Contrary to popular belief, there were no statues of the Holy Family or shepherds or angels in the manger that night nor did Francis recruit "live actors" to play any of those parts. Francis' ramshackle manger captured the simple poverty of the time and place in which God entered our human world.

Francis' biographer, Thomas of Celano, writes of that night: "Greccio was transformed into a second Bethlehem, and that wonderful night seemed like fullest day to both man and beast for the joy they felt at the renewing of the mystery."

Both John at the Jordan River and Francis in his recreated manger proclaim the same joyful news of Christmas: God is with us. In our own individual Advents of poverty and despair, God is with us: in our struggle to find meaning and purpose in this life, *God is with us*; in the humiliations we endure, in the messes we make of our lives and the messes others

make of their lives that we have to clean up, God is with us.

Advent faith calls us to an awareness that, despite the sufferings and difficulties of life, there is always healing. Despite our forgetting and abandoning God, God neither forgets nor abandons us. Through the cross, there is the eternal hope of resurrection.

May you have a most blessed Advent.

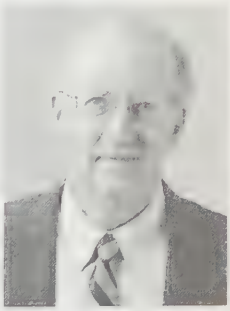
– The Rev. Harriet Shands,
via St. Paul's,
Beloit, Wisconsin

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NEW BOARD MEMBER

SPEAK, Inc. welcomes its newest board member, E. Mitchell Singleton, M. D., of Fayetteville, Arkansas. Dr. Singleton is an ophthalmologist. He and his wife, Barbara, have two children and two grandchildren. Born in Tyler, Texas, Dr. Singleton, is a graduate of Rice University and received his M.D. at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis. He did his residency in ophthalmology at Duke University. Confirmed at Trinity, Baytown, Texas, Dr. Singleton was President of the Canterbury Club and Junior Warden of the Collegiate Chapel of St. Bede at Rice University. He was an active lay reader at Trinity and at Rice. The Singleton's are long-term members of St. Paul's in Fayetteville where he has served two terms on the vestry.



Difficult Questions

One of the sad things that can be observed about the Church of God is the tendency we have to air our dirty laundry in public. The media have had a field day in recent months reporting our arguments in the area of sexual ethics.

First, there was the appointment of the new Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Rowan Williams. Whilst the majority of the church has increasingly realized that God has called a new Archbishop who is tremendously gifted, extremely pastoral, and a very holy and humble man, a few have chosen to condemn him. They have condemned him for asking questions in the area of human sexuality, which were hardly controversial in the academic arena in which he chose to ask them. Even in the area of faith, asking difficult questions about what we claim to believe is the only way we can truly discover the mind of Christ and discern the movement of the Holy Spirit. I do not agree with a number of Rowan Williams' personal views in the area of human sexuality, but I strongly applaud him for encouraging a dialogue that can only increase our awareness of God's will as well as our understanding of human nature. Such dialogue and debate has been at the very root of Judeo-Christian theology and education for centuries. Even before the time of Christ, Jewish leaders debated the law and the prophets in the temples and yeshivas of their communities. In my own seminary education, I had to grapple with issues and views far more controversial than those the Archbishop has been condemned for in the media.

The important thing to remember is that Rowan Williams strongly recognizes that it is not the role of the Archbishop to change the church's official doctrine or beliefs in these controversial areas. In his public role, he is strongly committed to upholding the church's traditional teachings, and I suspect he would be reluctant to do otherwise unless the church as

a whole prayerfully discerned that it was God's will.

The way in which the church responds to the spiritual needs of gay people is going to be an increasingly topical issue for the foreseeable future. Recent developments in other parts of the Anglican Communion have included the formal provision for the blessing of same-sex couples in the Diocese of New Westminster (Canada), the election of the first openly gay bishop in the Diocese of New Hampshire (U.S.A.), and the appointment and then withdrawal of an openly gay (but celibate) priest as Bishop of Reading (England). Many people find these developments troubling, and I would agree with many of their concerns. I would also say, however, that the church has often been too quick to condemn people simply because of their sexual orientation. Too often we have rejected and ostracized people who are created and loved by God simply because we might disagree with their lifestyle. That seems to me to be a far, far greater sin than any sexual activity regardless of how unbiblical, immoral or distasteful we might find it to be!

As people of God, we should be more concerned about our relationship with God and our fellow human beings, rather than worrying about what people get up to in their bedrooms. That is a statement, which should convict both militant gay-rights activist and fundamentalist Christian alike. As Disciples of Christ, we should strive for holiness. People will know we are Christians by our love, not by the way we condemn each other in the media!

— The Rev. Marc A.M. Wolverson, St. Michael and All Angels, Bramhall, England

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Theses from our Cathedral Door . . .



ISAIAH 40:8

An arresting and memorable image occurs towards the end of George Pal's 1951 movie *When Worlds Collide.* This classic of 50s sci-fi is kitschy and wonderful. The image, however, is unforgettable.

A colossal tidal wave engulfs New York City, the result of a hurtling planet drawing too close to the earth. All of Manhattan is underwater. Except for the top of the Empire State Building. The Empire State Building stands boldly and unmistakably over the top of the waves.

The Word of God is like that. The Good News of salvation is like that. Even when the tides of the spirit of this age inundate us, as they did our Church on August 6, the mercy of God stands higher.

As I asked the Church of the Advent family then, so I ask us all today: When the tides of wrong and cultural captivity recede — as we can be confident they will one day — will you and I, together with our beloved Church catholic, be still standing, like the supremely tall building in the movie, unbowed and uncollapsed?

— *The Very Rev. Dr. Theol. Paul F. M. Zahl, Dean, Cathedral Church of the Advent, Birmingham, Alabama*



CREAM OF THE CROP



The Autumn selection was replaced with a dual selection of *Christ on Trial: How the Gospel Unsettles Our Judgment* by Rowan Williams and *The First Christian: Universal Truth in the Teachings of Jesus* by Paul F. M. Zahl.

In *Christ on Trial*, the Archbishop of Canterbury looks in depth at the trial of Jesus, using it to teach readers how to face the challenges of life in today's trying times. Bringing the biblical accounts of Jesus' trial vividly to life, Rowan Williams highlights what can be learned from each of the four Gospel portraits. He follows these discussions with a reflection on Christian martyrdom and a meditation on tyranny, freedom, and truth. Williams draws from the Bible as well as from fiction, drama, and current events, describing ways in which society today continues to put Christ on trial.



In *The First Christian*, Paul Zahl seeks broader understanding of the life and teachings of Jesus. What did Jesus maintain, within his own setting and period that is true and applicable today? Zahl swims against the current of modern scholarship, arguing that Jesus was more "Christian" than "Jewish." Drawing from Jewish and Christian thinkers, Zahl shows Jesus to be a saving figure, a christological figure, even a radically Protestant figure. Zahl also brings his fresh perspective into present-day focus by showing how Jesus' dynamic teachings still have worldwide impact.



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NORTHERN LIGHTS

WHEN FAITH FELL DOWN DRUNK

Bible translators are an irreverent lot, at least the ones I know. The cherished translations of yesteryear are to them a treasury of the absurd. An old Cree priest here, who is working on a fresh translation of the Bible, points out that when the first Cree translation was made there was not yet a Cree word for 'donkey'. So on Palm Sunday Jesus rides into Jerusalem upon the back of a giant jackrabbit. Neither was there a Cree word for 'sheep' which became 'ugly dogs'. Notoriously the old Inuit translation of the Gospel of John rendered, "then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord," as "when the disciples saw the Lord they wagged their tails."

Minority-language Bible-making is a labor of love. Not so English-language Bible publishing which is a profitable business, with new versions appearing every year or two, each reflecting the fashions of its day, and each claiming to supercede all that has come before.

It is a middle-class industry. High and low culture conspire against it and have but one Bible — the King James. Here Johnny Cash and T.S. Eliot, professors of literature, and pomaded televangelists are bedfellows. How are we to account for it?

The reason occurred to me as I watched my favorite televangelist—a small, sweaty, strikingly eloquent man—raise a big King James Bible over his head during a sermon as if to punctuate the sky with it: the King James Bible is big. It is big in its sonorous, powerful tone; big in its authoritative directness; big in its ceremonious, fuguelike complication; big paradoxically in its capacity to be small—to infuse little things with the light of divine glory, to hint at the music of the spheres even in the particular, the domestic, the mun-

dane. . The King James Bible is as King James intended it to be: a royal book, the very voice of majesty, the revelation of God rendered in human language at once exalted and earthy. What better vehicle for a rural Mississippi stump preacher to raise his people into a vision of their heavenly home? This big book embraces all the horizons of human experience and penetrates beyond them in language commanding, didactic, accessible, glamorous, and rich.

Adam Nicolson in his fine new book, *God's Secretaries: the Making of the King James Bible*, shows how the luscious, allusive prose of the King James Bible reflected the luscious, allusive culture in which it was written, a culture that had an enormous appetite for the world and the things of the world. Yet it was a culture that was drawn to not only majesty, luxury, and the seductive glamour of the theatre but also to simplicity, plainness, and daylight. The translation was the project of a government trying to unify a society pulling apart over religion. James sought to bind the nation together in the use of one Bible. It would not be a compromise translation but rather an all-embracing synthesis of the catholic and puritan habits of mind. Simple, literal translations of the Hebrew and Greek (as the protestant faction demanded) would be brought to life with the full allusive and musical power of the English language in its most flexible century. Here too would be enough mystery, symbol and ceremony to satisfy the highest of high churchmen. Plodding Greek passages were made to sing; homely narrative was enriched with allusions that amplified and underscored their significance.

The power of the translation lay in its strangeness. It was not translated to sound contemporary, much less ordinary. Rather than creating the false impression that the Scriptures were written in the reader's own time and place, it conveys the truth:

the Bible is a living text from long ago and far away, the record of the great metaphysical acts of God mysteriously inserting himself into this world. For the King James Bible the medium is the message.

Francis Bacon, who wrote in this period, noted that "there is no beauty that hath not strangeness of proportion." There is no proportion so strange as the incarnation, no doctrine so beautiful. Neither before nor since has there been a language which could so effortlessly bear its weight.

Adam Nicolson, a grandson of Vita Sackville-West, brings to life the world of the translators — there were dozens of them working in teams. By the end of Nicolson's conducted tour there are few reputations left intact, especially that of Bishop Lancelot Andrews who as a parish priest stayed well away from his parish as more than a quarter of his parishioners died of the plague in 1603. Nicolson goes so far as to ask whether the translation was so good because the translators were so bad! Here we find Christian VI of Denmark and Norway, King James' brother-in-law, scandalizing even the Jacobean court with his unbuttoned debauchery. In a pageant to welcome this royal visitor, Faith, Hope and Charity appear on stage to make edifying speeches but "Faith was so drunk she couldn't get a word out; Hope couldn't stand upright and had to withdraw; only Charity, clearly the greatest of these, could say what she had to say." The translators knew all about the world, the flesh, and the devil.

Our world knows about these too which raises the question as to why the great majority of churches have put their King James Lectern Bibles in the vestry to molder.

Many people would argue that the King James language is unintelligible but the fact remains that this Bible is most popular among the least literate of congregations. Nicolson argues that it has lost its traction in the

modern church because the language of the King James Bible is the language of "patriarchy, of an instructed order, of richness as a form of beauty, of authority as a form of good." He contrasts it with the New English Bible, which is "motivated by the opposite, an anxiety not to bore or intimidate. It is driven, in other words, by the desire to please and, in that way, is a form of language which has died."

Nicolson, 45, has stopped going to church, he writes, because the polarities of honesty and tradition, purity and ceremony, nakedness and the comforts of a shared and familiar life are no longer voiced there. "These great questions are not the medium of modern religion." He stops short of saying that the church has lost interest in the Christian religion but the implication is there.

He is wrong about this, as the great struggles within the Anglican Communion at the moment demonstrate, and the revival of interest in traditional religion amongst the young bears witness. But the questions he raises are important ones. It is heartening that he finds these questions engaged in the truth of the Bible itself not in the literary brilliance of the English language's principal text. And yet language and meaning are not entirely distinguishable. From a literary point of view, Anglicans have in recent years created for themselves the softest and most soporific of pews. We need to ask critical questions as to whether it is the older language that is dead or ours. If it is ours, we have hard thinking and hard choices ahead of us.

– The Rt. Rev. Anthony Burton, Bishop of Saskatchewan



Five Talents

I remember hearing a story about Joyce, a mother, who lost her husband to AIDS/HIV leaving her with five children and no employment. However, with a small loan provided by a micro-credit program funded by Five Talents International and implemented by the Diocese of Kigezi, Joyce began selling second-hand clothes in the village markets surrounding the town of Kabale, Uganda. She makes enough profit to feed her children and send the oldest ones to school. The initial loan? $140 US, a small amount for most of us here in the United States but enough for Joyce and her family. By helping mothers like Joyce, the Diocese of Western Massachusetts is living into the call of Jubilee and the challenge set forth by the 1998 Lambeth conference to fund international development programs. We need to hear more about this call.

At the 1998 Lambeth Conference, I was a suite mate with the Rt. Rev. Simon Chiwanga, then chairman of the Anglican Consultative Council and Bishop from Tanzania. He shared his conviction that Five Talents International, an organization he helped found, provided the most effective means of helping people in developing countries deal with their chronic economic problems.

The Lambeth Resolution on International Debt and Economic Justice recognized the importance and urgency of these issues. It requested provinces and dioceses commit 7/10 of 1% of their budgets to international development programs. Our own General Convention in 2000 echoed this call.

In the fall of 2000 I brought to our Diocesan Council a request that we respond, relying on Five Talents to be the agency through which this help would be brought to those in need. We liked this program because it was connected with Anglican Churches, it taught people how to run their own businesses, and it provided on-going business and spiritual support for their life and ministry. This decision coincided

with our Centennial as a diocese. One member of the Council suggested that we as a diocese should match whatever amounts parishes gave to Five Talents in our Centennial year. In addition, our Diocese contributed 7/10 of 1% of our annual Diocesan Budget. We contributed again in 2002. The total amount contributed to Five Talents from this Diocese and its parishes now amounts to almost $88,000.

Some people have asked me how difficult it was for us to begin this Jubilee initiative. For us it was a simple response to a legitimate request. We have been blessed with God's abundance. Our sisters and brothers around the Anglican Communion struggle with great economic challenges. Christ called us to love our neighbors. We share with them the abundance God has given us. This was not a matter of argument or debate. It was simply an obedient response of love to Christ.

We find joy in knowing that we are making a difference in the lives of others like Joyce who struggle with poverty and survival yet can experience transformation of their lives through our investment in micro-economic loans.

If you would like to know more about Five Talents or the Jubilee initiative, go to **www.fivetalents.org** or call 703-242-6016.

– The Rt. Rev. Gordon Scruton, Bishop, Diocese of Western Massachusetts

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Pectoral Crosses

There seems to be a paucity of information on designs of pectoral crosses worn by bishops of the Episcopal Church. Scott Hatfield and Jennifer Peters are working to rectify this and are collecting information to be placed in the Archives of the Episcopal Church in Austin, Texas. They are seeking any documentation – pictorial or narrative – which describe individual pectoral crosses and the significance of the design to the wearer. Information may be sent to PO Box 2247, Austin, TX 78768. Contact Mr. Hatfield at 800-244-0639 or by e-mail at **swhcpa@aol.com** for more information.

Reflections for the Family of God

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.
– II Corinthians 8:9

Philip, my nine year old son burst into the room and spoke with great enthusiasm, "Dad, you've got to come and see this! It is so awesome!"

As I followed him up into the playroom I wondered what I was going to see. He'd been playing up there for a while. I thought perhaps some new level had been reached on a Nintendo game. Maybe he was playing with one of his many toys. Perhaps some expensive gift was no longer collecting dust but actually being enjoyed.

We reached the playroom and he pointed with a smile beaming on his face at a long pile of magazine pages on the floor. "Watch this!" He went to the end of the room, walking past a long row of magazine papers. At the end of the papers was a padded mat. Then he took off at full speed and as he came to the edge of the papers he slid on them across the floor and down onto the mat. "This is so cool!"

A day or two later, four-year old Stephen said to me, "Daddy, watch my new game." He proceeded to take an empty Kleenex box and kick it along the floor. "Wanna play it with me?"

Meanwhile bins full of toys lay idle collecting dust.

As we approach Christmas I have to remind myself of these stories. I always have visions of how happy my children will be when they open their presents on Christmas. I think of them playing for hours, days and years with them. The truth is: this rarely happens. We spend lots of money, as do our relatives, on toys that the kids play with for a day or two and then go back to kicking the Kleenex box, or sliding on magazines.

I know I need to be careful not to allow the emotions from this "illusion of my own

making" that they will love the toys forever and the commercialism of our culture persuade me to spend lots of money on toys. Now, don't get me wrong, I'm not against buying toys for the kids, but I have to remember that a modest, frugal budget for toys can still bring a number of nice presents for the kids to open Christmas morning.

This year I am considering other gifts for my children. Here is my list:

1) Take an afternoon and surprise them with my coming home early and playing with them. What kids need more than toys is my time and my love.

2) I've asked grandparents to keep the toy presents fewer and simpler. We will use "Christmas money" for a family trip instead.

3) The most precious gift I can give is to share with them the blessings of life lived in faithfulness to Christ. I will strive to give them more intentional times in which we talk about and share what life in Christ is all about.

4) Another gift I have on my list to give them is time to prepare for and be more regular with family devotions in which we study the Scriptures together.

5) I plan to linger longer with them at bedtime and not allow our weekly schedule to be such a hurried blur.

6) I plan to put my own spiritual life more wholly, consistently in order so that I set an example for them.

Jesus warns us that it is "easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than a rich person to enter the kingdom of heaven." Why make our children "rich with stuff" that might actually burden them with material things that could turn their hearts away from God? Why focus their attention on the material, which might hinder their walk with Christ, rather than help it?

Why make them rich so that it could be harder for them to enter the Kingdom of heaven?

– The Rev. Kent Walley,
St. Luke's, Hilton Head,
South Carolina

CARING for CREATION

This is the final article in a five part series on the Bible and creation

Some of the same passages in the Bible that proclaim the relationship between the Creator and his creation exhort us not merely to faith but also to action. In the First Creation Narrative, God creates human beings in the divine "image and likeness" and gives us dominion over other creatures (Gen.1:26-28). We humans are to exercise authority over the earth as God's representatives. In the Second Creation Narrative, human beings are set in the Garden "to till and to keep it" (Gen. 2:15). In these two revelations, we human beings were given, out of all creatures, the major responsibility for "this fragile earth, our island home."

This biblical declaration has not always been correctly understood. The word "dominion" does not mean "domination" in the sense of "exploitation." We are not to "use it before we lose it," as one prominent fundamentalist minister put it. Rather, to exercise dominion means that as God's vice-regents we are appointed to exercise stewardship on God's behalf. And the verb "to keep" (Gen. 2:15) in Hebrew also means "to serve." Humans are to care for the land, to serve it and preserve it, even as they work it. These commandments are also to be understood in the light of God's evident love for his creation. We are divinely commanded to treat the earth as a lover would treat his beloved, to love it as God loves it. That mysterious phrase, "made in the image and likeness of God," may mean many things, but it surely means that we are to act in the same loving way toward the creation that God acts. We all have experienced how love can impel us to an unconditional and self-sacrificing relationship with the one we love. In that same spirit we are to care for the creation.

That's a tall order, and we human beings have often failed to carry it out, especially in our own time. We only need to look around us to see the enormous travail the earth

suffers from overpopulation and overconsumption, and their attendant ills of air and water pollution, deforestation, global warming, ozone destruction, land degradation, and species extinction to realize that we need to get back to our task of caring for the earth. Those stubborn and unyielding sins of the lust for power and greed, twin offspring of the original sin of disobedience, still characterize the human condition. Surrounded by the beauty of the earth, we see increasingly with every passing year the ugliness we have injected into it, whether the result of unrestrained consumption, or of the basic need to feed, house and keep warm a burgeoning humanity, so many of whom struggle simply to stay alive.

Fortunately, people of all cultures and faiths are awakening to the groaning of the earth and are beginning to make commitments and pool ideas and resources to help renew the environment. Science has shown us how in every environment all living things are biologically and ecologically interrelated; the Native Americans who referred to the bison and the beaver as their cousins knew instinctively what we now know scientifically: all life is inextricably bound together.

We have also become painfully aware of technology's ambiguous and unpredictable ability both to create and to destroy, and our urgent need to make it our servant to preserve and restore and not to be its servant to harm the earth and its creatures. Science may instruct us, and technology may help us find ways to bring the created elements of our island home and the life that it nourishes back into harmony, if we but use them wisely.

Steven Bouma-Prediger and other ecotheologians have suggested some guiding principles: we should strive to live within our means, exercise caution in decisions that affect the earth and living creatures, practice and support ways to sustain rather than deplete renewable resources, work for the preservation of diverse kinds of life, and see that the particular creatures under our care are given their needful

rest. Such principles and practices may help us to become more effective earth keepers.

As daunting a task it is to "repair the world," as the rabbis put it, the Bible's images of the earth's beauty and God's ecstatic joy in creation, and the creation's grateful hymns of praise, keep beckoning us back to our divine mandate to be good stewards. And we have a Power to call to our aid. The poet Gerard Manley Hopkins surveyed the world "bleared, smeared with toil," and continued:

And for all this, nature is never spent,

There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;

And though the last lights off the black West went

Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs –

Because the Holy Ghost over the bent

World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.

We who have been made a new creation in Christ have the power of the Holy Spirit. The same spirit who brooded over the waters at the beginning of creation (Gen. 1:2) also renews the face of the earth (Ps. 104:30). Listening to the Word, inspired by the Spirit, we can arouse ourselves individually, as a congregation of believers, and as a human family to the task.

During this week, may we all meditate upon God's call to us to be stewards and keepers of this good earth, and consider how each of us may live out this our primary vocation.

Readings:

Steven Bouma-Prediger, *For the Beauty of the Earth: A Christian vision for creation care.*

Audrey Chapman, Rodney Peterson, and Barbara Smith-Moran, *Consumption, Population, and Sustainability: Perspectives from Science and Religion.*

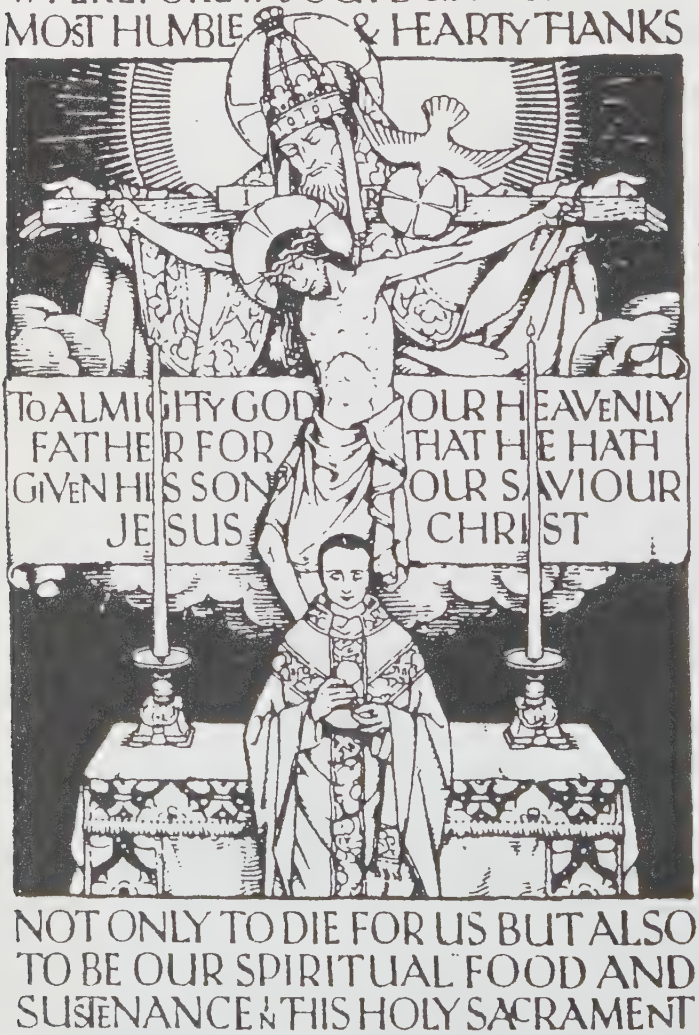
Brennan R. Hill, *Christian Faith and the Environment.*

Max Oelschlaeger, *Caring for Creation: An ecumenical approach to the environmental crisis.*

H. Paul Santmire, *The Travail of Nature.*

— Dr. Robert J. Schneider, St. Luke's, Boone, North Carolina

(Bob Schneider is a member of the Episcopal Church's Committee on Science, Technology and Faith, and chairs its subcommittee on Creation.)



– via THE ANGELUS, Guardian Angels, Lantana, Florida

WE RECOMMEND

[Books with ITEM number are available through The Anglican Bookstore, others are available from your local bookseller.]

HARK THE GLAD SOUND: Music for Advent and Christmas (Audio) by the Palmer Memorial Church Choir, Houston, Texas. This CD features hymns and songs, appropriate for Christmas and the Advent season as well. The choir also has a CD entitled *NEARER MY GOD TO THEE*, recorded shortly after 9/11. To order, contact Palmer Memorial Episcopal Church, 6221 Main St, Houston, Texas, 77030. Telephone 713-529-6196 or E-mail **cdknapp@palmerchurch.org**

ANGLICANISM AND THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH by Paul Avis (T&T Clark). A standard text on the development of Anglican identity and ecclesiology from the Reformation to the present.

AND WE FLY AWAY: Living Beyond Alzheimer's by Ray Ashford (Augsburg Fortress). In poetic prose, Ashford describes the final years in the life of his wife and his own emergence from grief.

LET THE BASTARDS GO: From Cuba to Freedom on God's Mercy by Joe Morris Doss (Louisiana State University Press). Fr. Doss and (now Bishop) Leo Frade purchased an aged WWII ship, renamed her *God's Mercy*, and obeyed God rather than man in rescuing Cubans in the 1980s.

THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON GOD AND BEAUTY by John Milbank, Graham Ward, and Edith Wyschogrod (Trinity Press). Three essays on God and beauty by cutting-edge theologians. Not for general reading but excellent for those with background in the field. **Item # T067**



A PRAYER FOR

Maine

Thank you, God, for the state of Maine,
reaching ever for the first light of day.
As Thy people wake to the eastern rays,
what chowder of nourishment dost Thou
prepare for body and soul:
concocted so delectably of pine needles
and potatoes, of herring and clams and lobsters
in their rocky lairs, of blueberries
and new-mown hay and a thousand lakes
and little boats brave upon the deep.

Of such blessing did our fathers and mothers
distill their rugged liberty: Grant us grace to win
the same, along the country roads and on the
fringed and tasseled coast of our wooded land;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

–The Very Rev. Francis B. Sayre, Jr., Dean Emeritus, Washington National Cathedral.



HILLSPEAKING

EARLIER in this Jubilee Year, Patient Wife and I strolled from the Farm House across Trinity Park to see a tentative layout of the first bricks contributed to and incised for the Hillspeak Memorial (Easter 2003 TAD, page 57 and following, and on the inside back wrapper of this issue).

Trading on "insider information," I contributed the first four bricks of the memorial in memory of my great-grandfather (SAMUEL, 1800 - 1873); my grandfather (SIMEON, 1849 - 1908); my father (RICHARD STANLEY, 1891 - 1955); and our infant son (RICHARD STANLEY, MARCH 1949).

Contributions have been coming in slowly, but steadily, and from the beginning, it has been evident that the rationale for the wording on each brick is as wide-ranging as the homes of the contributors. Consider the following inscriptions.

From Missouri:

FOR A FRIEND
FROM A FRIEND
SHALOM

Who is friend #1? We do not know for sure: perhaps the Father Founder, perhaps Hillspeak, or maybe TAD itself. There is no ambiguity, however, in this one from Virginia:

HAPPY I MET FR FOLAND
NEVADA MO '59

Father Foland is not the only TAD editor to receive specific recognition. From Arkansas:

FRED BARBEE
EDITOR - TAD
1986 - 2001

Visits to hallowed places, and there are many who feel Hillspeak to be such, leave lasting impressions:

H DEAN COWLES
FOR VISITS
1974 -1998

There are many who remember SPEAK's genesis in Missouri from the EPISCOPAL BOOK CLUB and its parish garage headquarters to its many faceted role now ensconced in the Twin Barns atop Grindstone Mountain and dubbed "Hillspeak," by the Father Founder:

COTTEY & NEVADA
TO HILLSPEAK
MARION AND DEE

And remembrance is not just for editors. A Trustee who served on SPEAK'S Board, while first in Nebraska and later in California, has been memorialized by his widow:

JAMES BRICE
CLARK 1914-96
PRIEST PRINTER

Weddings also are being remembered:

BEN & MARTHA
CARSON
MAY 5, 1998

May their marriage last as long as, or longer than, the brick that memorializes it.

The Psalter is also brought to our attention:

JOHN CATON
LINGOLD JR
PSALM 90

There are many who have found a refuge at Hillspeak "from one generation to another."

We hope your visit has left a lasting impression, or that, if you have not visited, you will do so to make your own lasting impression. We will welcome your visit, and if you wish to leave an incised brick, or two, for the Hillspeak Memorial, that, too, will be most welcome.

– *The Trustees' Warden*

TAD on TAPE

We are offering
The Anglican Digest
on audio tape for readers
with vision problems
and for those who would
prefer to *listen* to TAD.

Please write
The Anglican Digest,
805 CR 102,
Eureka Springs, Arkansas
72632

or call 479-253-9701.

BY WILL AND DEED

$50,000 to St. Andrew's, Rapid City, South Dakota, from the estate of Grace Bennett, life-long member of the Episcopal Church. The Rev. Deacon Virginia L. Bird serves St. Andrew's.

◆

Dr. Jerry Nestroy, professor at Sam Houston State University, Huntsville, Texas, left her entire estate to her parish family at St. Stephen's, Huntsville. The Rev. James C. Morgan is rector of St. Stephen's.

◆

$12,778 to SPEAK, Eureka Springs, Arkansas, from the estate of Patricia J. Beall of Ponca City, Oklahoma. Ms. Beall was a long-time supporter of TAD.



THE FRANCISCAN ORDER OF THE DIVINE COMPASSION, (an Ecumenical Anglican Religious Order), is a traditional, orthodox Religious Order formed to promote the historic Catholic Faith as the Anglican Church received it, closely following in the footsteps and spirit of St. Francis. Inquiries: Men and women called to be a Tertiary of the Third Order, write: Fr. David, OSF, Guardian, 210 Ashantilly St., St. Simons Island, GA 31522.

Advertisement



AND IN ALL PLACES



MAKES THE HEART SAD... The 2003 General Convention of the Episcopal Church, US, stepped beyond scripture, tradition, and reason, ignoring the majority of Anglican voices throughout the world as well as the principle of consensus and, by affirming the elevation of The Rev. Gene Robinson to bishop of the Diocese of New Hampshire, unleashed a high level of uncertainty and fear amongst the Anglican Communion. We pray the Holy Spirit will lead us into a stronger future through the convening of a conference of primates in Lambeth as well as national and regional conferences scheduled for the fall in the US.

THE REV. JAY L. CROFT, St. John's Church for the Deaf, Birmingham, Alabama, received awards from the Council of Organizations Serving the Deaf and from the Alabama Association for the Deaf at the recent AAD biennial convention.

THE AMERICAN CATHEDRAL in Paris has installed the Rev. Zachary Fleeetwood, former rector at St. Peter's, Morristown, New Jersey, as the ninth Dean of the Cathedral.

THE REV. JOHNCY ITTY was elected ninth bishop of the Diocese of Oregon. Born in Bhopal, India, in 1963, he becomes the first "Generation X" bishop in the Episcopal Church.

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH in Western Washington celebrated its 150th anniversary with an Old-Fashioned Family Picnic in Point Defiance Park. Assisting Bishop Sanford Hampton put on 19th century clerical garb and dressed as John Adams Paddock, the first Episcopal bishop of the Washington Territory. The church dates to the work of an Episcopal missionary, the Rev. John McCarty, in 1853 at Fort Vancouver.

THE JOINT ANGLICAN DIOCESAN MOTHERS' UNION in Ghana called for total cancel-

lation of debt owed by developing countries as the surest way to help those countries to forge ahead. The Mothers' Union made the appeal at an awareness campaign in Ghana where they paraded to stress the need for the cancellation of the crippling debt of Third World Countries.

✠ SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND FAITH Network Officer Robert Schneider, a retired member of the Berea College faculty, is writing a set of annotated essays on important topics in science and religion from a Christian perspective. Berea College has launched a web page for this special project. Read the essays, meet the author, and write your own comments at Berea College "Science and Faith" Homepage: **www.berea.edu/SpecialProject/scienceandfaith/**.

✠ ARCHBISHOP-ELECT HENRY OROMBI of Nebbi Diocese in the Province of Uganda was unanimously elected the head of the Anglican Church in Uganda to replace Archbishop Livingstone Mpalanyi Nkoyooyo. The 32-member Church of Uganda House of Bishops elected Orombi after two days of fasting and praying for spiritual guidance at Namirembe Cathedral, the provincial seat of the Church of Uganda.

✠ COOL WEBSITE: **songfulpsalms.net** The musical manuscripts found on this site are Psalms set to musical song rather than to formulas of chant. The Psalms are responsorial with refrains that should be sung by the congregation. Choir or cantor may sing the main body of each Psalm. The Psalm texts are those found in the Book of Common Prayer (1979) and the refrains are from the Gradual Psalter published by Church Publishing, Inc. The majority of these 119 settings are original scores by Dr. Thomas Hoekstra.

✠ A TIP OF THE BIRETTA to the Rt. Rev. Anthony Burton, Bishop of Saskatchewan on the 10th Anniversary of his Episcopal Consecration.

✠ THE AVERAGE AGE of those seeking ordination in 2001 was 47, up from age 33 in the 1960s and 39 in the 1980s.

Roughly half of those seeking ordination today are women.

✠ **Modern Martyrs...** Six missionary hostages from the Anglican Melanesian Brothers are dead according to Solomon Islands rebel leader, Harold Keke. Keke, leader of the Guadalcanal Liberation Front, is believed responsible for nearly 50 killings in the past year.

✠ **Trinity Church,** Pine Bluff, Arkansas, celebrates its 165th Anniversary as an Episcopal Church presence in Pine Bluff in December. Bishop Polk sent the Rev. Mr. Mitchell to Pine Bluff in December of 1838. Next year will mark the 145th Anniversary of their Church Building.

✠ **Operation Pass Along** extends grateful thanks to the thoughtful person or persons in San Diego, California, who sent twenty-six vestments and clerical items.

✠ **Apologies...** The web site given in the Lent A.D. 2003 TAD for the Anglican Library Association is not functioning. There has been no indication when it will return.

Keep the faith and pass it on.



REMEMBER TAD IN YOUR WILL

You can help the ministries of the Episcopal Book Club, The Anglican Digest, Operation Pass Along, The Anglican Bookstore and The Howard Lane Foland Library by remembering us in your will. You may do so by using the following wording:

"I hereby give, devise and bequeath to the Society for Promoting and Encouraging Arts and Knowledge of the Church (SPEAK), a not-for-profit corporation, with the present address of 805 County Road 102, Eureka Springs, AR 72632-9705 and its successor, the greater of $_____, or _____ percentage of my gross estate, to be used in such manner as determined by its trustees."

✠ DEATHS ✠

✠ The Rev. Edward D. Alston, 91, in Louisville, Kentucky. Fr. Alston served parishes in Virginia and Kentucky. He was a noted civil rights advocate.

✠ The Rev. Herman C. H. Badecker, 81, in Cornwall, New York. Fr. Badecker was rector emeritus of St. John's, Cornwall and was an associate of the Order of the Holy Cross.

✠ The Rev. James G. Bingham, 61, in Cape Coral, Florida. Rector at Epiphany, Cape Coral, he served several parishes in Southwest Florida as an interim. He created the office of planned giving for the Diocese of San Joaquin and served as canon to the ordinary for communications in the Diocese of Maryland.

✠ The Rev. A. Blanchard Boyer, 87, in Fort Worth, Texas. Fr. Boyer served parishes in Kansas, Colorado, and Texas. He also served the Diocese of Fort Worth on the arts and architecture committee, contributing to the development of liturgical and pipe organ music.

✠ The Rev. Frank S. Doremus, 87, in Austin, Texas. Fr. Doremus served parishes in Georgia and Texas before becoming professor of homiletics at the Seminary of the Southwest, a position he held until his retirement in 1985.

✠ The Rev. Canon James Griffis, 74, in Skokie, Illinois. Former canon theologian to the Presiding Bishop, Canon Griffis taught at several Episcopal seminaries, most recently at Seabury-Western. He also served as editor of the *Anglican Theological Review*, and edited the *New Church Teaching Series*.

✠ Mr. Robert L. Hall, 89, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Mr. Hall was former president of the Board of Directors of The Living Church Foundation.

✠ The Rev. Orin Griesmyer, 94, in St. Petersburg, Florida.

He was rector emeritus of the Church of the Transfiguration in New York City. He was past president of the Seabury-Western alumni association.

✠ **The Rev. Dr. Kristin Sundquist**, 60, in Saratoga, California. Dr. Sundquist served as organist and choirmaster at Trinity, San Jose for 20 years prior to becoming associate rector, organist, and music director at St. Andrew's, Saratoga. She was dean of the San Jose chapter of the American Guild of Organists.

✠ **Canon Emeritus Richard Wayne Dirksen**, 82, in Washington, D.C. Canon Dirksen served on the National Cathedral's staff for 48 years. In 1968, Dean Francis B. Sayre, Jr., appointed him precentor with responsibility for oversight of all worship services at the Cathedral. He was appointed the Cathedral's fourth organist-choirmaster in 1977 and was named a Cathedral Canon in 1982.

✠ **The Rev. Donald Lee Jackson**, 76, in Tahlequah, Oklahoma. Instrumental in the formation of St. Aidan's, Tulsa, Fr. Jackson served St. Basil's, Tahlequah until his retirement in 1999. He was an associate of the Community of the Holy Spirit.

✠ **The Very Rev. Harold F. LeMoine**, 94, in San Diego, California. While serving as dean of the Cathedral of the Incarnation, Garden City, New York, he was active in diocesan affairs of the Diocese of Long Island. He was an associate of the Society of St. John the Evangelist.

✠ **The Rt. Rev. Alfred Woolcock**, 93, in Oshawa, Ontario. Bishop Woolcock served as priest in parishes in Canada and England before his elevation to bishop in the Anglican Catholic Church of Canada in 1984.

✠ **The Rev. David Zimmerman**, 84, in Fort Myers, Florida. Fr. Zimmerman was assistant priest at St. Luke's, Fort Myers, and a Kairos Prison Ministry leader.

✠ May they rest in peace and rise in glory. ✠

Welcome to Sunday: An Introduction to Worship in the Episcopal Church, by Christopher L. Webber, an Episcopal priest who has served inner-city, suburban, rural and overseas parishes.

The perfect book for newcomers who are often confused by the worship service, this book is also an excellent book for those who have been sitting in the pews without fully understanding what happens on Sunday morning. Webber takes readers from the sidewalk outside the church, guides them through the service, and sends them out again when the service is over. **Item M035T** (softbound, 128 pp) **$11.95**

How to Be a Perfect Stranger: The Essential Religious Etiquette Handbook, edited by Stuart M. Matlins and Arthur Magida.

This third edition is not a guide to theology, nor is it presented from the perspective of any particular faith. Instead, it answers questions about the practical details and basic beliefs behind the ceremonies of twenty-nine of the largest religions and denominations in North America.

From the African American Methodist Church to the United Church of Christ, this handbook covers every large religious group in North America. **Item K004T** (softbound, two-column format, 399 pp) **$19.95**

Faith in Exile: Seeking Hope in Times of doubt, by Joseph T. Kelley, vice president for mission effectiveness at Merrimack College in North Andover, Massachusetts.

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THE FOUR SUNDAYS OF DECEMBER

The Four Sundays of December in the Anglican tradition are called Advent, from the Latin word *adventus*, which means "coming." This is the season when we put away ordinary time and turn our attention to the coming of the Lord. This is not merely making preparations for keeping the great Christian festival of the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ during the twelve days of Christmas. Nor is it keeping the world's merchants happy and relieved by buying perhaps more than we should or can comfortably afford for Christmas presents for family and friends. It is more than decorating our homes with greens, poinsettia, model trains, and Christmas trees (a decoration that should NOT be put up before the Fourth Sunday of Advent, and preferably not until Christmas Eve on December 24). It is true that the Lord Jesus' nativity can be described as an *adventus* in the past, but he also comes to us now, in the present, through the reading of his Word and in the eucharistic gathering to celebrate his resurrection and eternal reign, our participating now eucharistically in the eternal, heavenly, Messianic banquet. This is another *adventus*, each and every time we give thanks over bread and wine together.

And then there is that third *adventus*: his coming to gather us to him on the last great day of this universe's history, the Day of the Lord. We read a great deal about the Day of the Lord in the Sunday lessons in late November and through December. In the original Greek of the New Testament, this advent or coming is called by the Greek word *parousia*. It refers to the appearance, the manifestation of the judge of the living and the dead on the Day of the Lord. This is not the kind of coming when a friend rings your doorbell and you invite him or her in for a cup of coffee or tea. This is a solemn, formal, processional coming. So the Lord Christ will come and appear on the Day of the Lord, not with a mere honk of a car horn or the ring of a door bell, not even

with "Hail to the Chief," but with hosts of angels and archangels, all blowing the deep bass of yet humanly unexperienced heavenly trumpets that will move earth far more than the great trumpets in St. John the Divine, (which can shake that great stone building mightily!). It is this *adventus* for which we really want to prepare and to which we want to give our thoughts this December. We don't want to be unprepared when those trumpets sound! So by all means, buy your Christmas presents, decorate your homes, put up your Christmas trees on Christmas Eve. But do this Advent, I pray you, give serious attention to the ways the Lord Christ comes and will come into your hearts. Do not be found unprepared, your relationship with our Lord distant, lukewarm, and in second or third priority in your lives. Keep your lamps well supplied with oil, be thoughtful and prayerful.

– *The Rev. Paul B. Clayton, Jr., Ph. D., St. Andrew's, Poughkeepsie, New York*

St. Brigid of Kildaire

One of the Christmas presents I received was an icon painted by Anne Davidson, a parishioner at St. Mark's in Coldwater. The icon is of St. Brigid of Kildaire (also known as St. Bride), whose feast day is February 1st. Brigid was a Celtic saint who lived in Ireland in the 400s. Her father was the poet laureate of the king and also a Druid. Early in her life, Brigid decided not only to become a Christian, but a nun as well. The icon shows St. Brigid holding a wooden tub of milk. In the background is a very grateful and incredulous looking cow. One of the miracles attributed to St. Brigid is that the cows were not producing milk so she began to sing to them and the milk freely flowed.

Besides singing to cows, Brigid founded a monastery at Kildaire, where both male and female monastics lived. Brigid had such authority and wisdom in spiritual matters that one legend says she became a bishop.

But, as author Sam Portaro has pointed out in his book *Brightest and Best,* one of the most important aspects of the life of St. Brigid is how she dealt with people's "past." The site of her monastery at Kildaire was also the site of a pagan goddess cult where a sacred flame, believed to have derived from the goddess herself, burned. Brigid did not put out the flame but kept it burning. Coming from a Druid background, maybe she understood that, even if she intended to convert the goddess worshipers to Christianity, she need not denigrate their history, their background or who they had been — for God could use that too.

That is Christianity at its best, built upon existing religious ceremonies rather than denigrating them. We have carried that over into our day to day faith by realizing that we need not denigrate our past and continually grovel in our sins. Rather, it is more upbuilding to our faith and respectful of God's mercy and grace to see our sins, shortcomings and failures as something God can use to help move us into the people we should be. (This does not mean, of course, that we rejoice in our sins — but that they not weigh us down so that we're unable to learn from them and move forward). There are probably questionable moments in our past — from sins we've committed to moments of unfaith. And yet God has used them and built upon them. The recollection of our sins can remind us of and make us grateful for God's grace and forgiveness. Moments of unfaith may have caused us to search for understanding and thereby moved us into a deeper faith.

I am grateful for the icon of St. Brigid. Besides showing the great possibilities which lie in singing to cows, Brigid also reminds me that God can redeem anything, including us. God's grace, forgiveness and power are great enough that he can use what we were to enhance what we are — and can yet become.

— The Rev. DeLiza Spangler, St. Paul's, St. Joseph, Michigan

THE WORK OF CHRISTMAS

When the song of the angels
is stilled,
When the star in the sky is
gone,
When the kings and princes
are home,
When the shepherds are
back with their flocks,
The work of Christmas
begins:
To find the lost
To heal the broken
To release the prisoner
To rebuild the nations
To bring peace among
brothers and sisters
To make music in the heart.

– *Howard Thurman*

This little piece is one of my favorites. It reminds me that the real work of Christmas is not in putting a tree up or taking it down, not in decorating or undecorating, not in shopping or in returning things to the store. Rather the work of Christmas is recognizing the meaning of Christ's coming for the world and us. To begin to understand that meaning is to begin to live it out by mending a quarrel ... seeking out a forgotten friend ... dismissing suspicion and replacing it with trust ... writing a letter ... sharing some treasure ... giving a soft answer ... encouraging youth ... manifesting our faith in word and deed ... keeping a promise ... finding the time ... foregoing a grudge ... forgiving an enemy ... listening ... apologizing if you were wrong ... trying to understand ... rejecting envy as unworthy ... Examining your demands on others ... appreciating others ... being kind and gentle ... laughing a little ... laughing a little more ... taking up arms against malice ... decry complacency ... express your gratitude ... welcome a stranger … speak your love ... speak it again ... speak it still once more!

Let us join together in the work of Christmas now and every day this year!

– *The Rev. Dr. Sara I. Chandler,*
via THE ANSWER,
St. Margaret's,
Woodbridge, Virginia

THE CHRISTIAN IN EPIPHANY

For the Christian, there is the perennial gap in the liturgical year between the high points of Christmas and Ash Wednesday leading to Easter. The onset of the winter "blahs" in many people's lives coincides with the liturgically non-descript period of the last part of Epiphany season.

Advent has the image of awakening and expectant waiting as its theme. So what is the theme of Epiphany? What does Epiphany call us to do?

It seems to me that the theme of Epiphany is shining. The traditional symbol of Epiphany is the star leading the wise to a manifestation of Divinity, and the themes for the first Sundays in Epiphany echo that theme. But how do we make that theme of shining something real in our lives as we struggle with snow and cold and a general feeling of bleakness?

In answering that question, I suggest that we ponder for a moment how we are called to shine, to show forth God in our lives. For Christians, our lives show God to others the more we model them on the life of Jesus. In other words, in Pauline language, our lives reflect the glory shown forth already in the life and message of Jesus the Christ.

The way to show God to others is first of all to come into a living relationship with the One that Jesus called Father and call him our Father as well. Just as Jesus did, we have to spend some time with God in prayer, contemplation and meditation each day. As we do this, we develop our abilities to listen to God, in silence as well as in Scripture and in the liturgy of the Church.

But our calling does not end in contemplation of God in our lives. Jesus tells us to love our neighbors as well as God. Our shining as we reflect God is not a shining in a dark vacuum; it is a directed, intentional shining. We have to listen to our neighbors as we listen to God, in order to find out how our shining can reach into their darkness. And this is the hard

part; we have to learn to cut through lies, distortions, illusions; and surface distractions, both our own and our neighbors', to get to our reality.

This is always difficult, in large part because a part of us wants to believe the easy falsehoods. We want to accept what the mass media and our government tell us about the world, because it is easier to do so than to search out reality. We prefer the soothing illusion because, to paraphrase T.S. Eliot, humankind cannot stand too much reality. Facing reality and the God of reality might force us to change and to suffer discomfort. Especially after 9/11, we have collectively gone into a kind of sleep, in large part, out of shock, anger, and fear, understandably perhaps. But there are signs that some people are beginning to stir and to begin to brush off the dust to let a little more light be reflected from them. May we shine with them this Epiphany.

– The Rev. Dr. Max A. Myers,
Canon Theologian,
St. Paul's, Buffalo, New York

ARISE! SHINE! FOR YOUR LIGHT HAS COME!

(Isaiah 60:1)

Light is God's creative energy – launched in the dawning of the First Day. From that primal light, all life is born. Wherever light shines, God's people must arise and live into the divine-human alliance that labors to shatter all forms of darkness. The exiles in Babylon followed God's light in their journey home to Israel; the Gentile astrologers tracked the light of a star and discovered, in a foreign land, an infant prince of peace; Mary Magdalene saw in the first light of Easter the glowing face of the crucified rabbi, her soul's dearest friend. Martin Luther King, Jr. prayed and marched and died in the light of God who "is able to keep us from falling, and lift us from the dark valley of despair to the bright mountain of hope, from the midnight of desperation to the daybreak of joy."

To people of faith, the power of God's light may

appear self-evident as clear as a child's index finger aflame with *this little light* – circling to the words: "let it shine, let it shine, let it shine!" While I treasure this little light, I have my suspicions — not negative suspicions — but questions about the metaphor that holds within it the energy of the divine.



I am not alone. Scientists continue to struggle to understand light as both wave and particle, as energy and mass. Physicist Niels Bohr cautioned against attempting to resolve the mystery of the true nature of light. "We cannot," he said, "visualize the combination of wave and particle. We must recognize that the two aspects of light are different faces that light shows. There is a duality, but it is not possible to see this duality. We must see first one face, then the other." And so it is with God's light — particles of love in motion — always new, always seeking, first one face, then the other. Mysteries, after all, are not meant to be solved.

In the manger, our light has come as the divine light breaks into history.

Living in this light, we discover first one face of the mystery, then the other:

- Light that shines in every healing moment.
- Light that reveals inner secrets trapped in shadows of fear.
- Light that points to paths previously unseen.
- Light that adds a new star to the universe.
- Light that warms the embers of a dormant faith.
- Light that can never be overcome by darkness.

Morning has broken. Your light has come. Get up and let your little light shine!

Lord our God, may your light, through us, ignite the flame of peace in this world that you so love. Amen.

– The Rev. Linda Kerr,
Church of the Redeemer,
Baltimore, Maryland

Thoughts on Epiphany

BUT THIS I KNOW

Many times, in the course of my ministry, I have sat face to face with someone going through unexplainable suffering and said, "No, I don't understand it either. But this I know! God is here with power to redeem what we can't understand." Every time I made that claim, I came away thinking, "Rick, you better be sure you're right about this, because if you're just saying empty words, the final result for this person will be worse than the problem he now faces." What gives me the audacity to say, "This I know! God is willing and able to bring good out of your situation?"

It's a question particularly appropriate for the Feast of the Epiphany. What makes Epiphany a good time to think about God's real nature and his sovereign power is the very name of the day itself — Epiphany. It means a revealing, a showing forth, a manifestation of something previously hidden. The implication behind this celebration is that there was a time when no one could accurately answer the biggest questions about God. What is he like? What are his intentions? His powers? His limitations? People from the beginning of time have been guessing about God, drawing their conclusions from the world of nature, and from their own deep-seated desire to worship a God they could comprehend. But as long as they were guessing, no one could say, "But this I know!" about God. This I think! This I really, really hope! But not, "This I know!"

Epiphany is the day when the birth of Jesus first began to shed a new kind of light, to give a new clarity about God for people all over the world. Some Jewish shepherds had been told about a savior's birth. But now, twelve days after the baby's arrival, some foreigners showed up, astrologers from far away places, guided, they said, by a remarkable star. The amazing thing about St. Matthew's report of the Wise Men's visit was that they fell down and worshipped that baby. This wasn't merely a scientific

expedition to go see where the star led and then go home and write a paper about it. They were wise enough to see that in this baby, God was disclosing the most important truth about himself. He is a God who gets personally involved. He is not content to exist in isolation behind a curtain of mystery, but instead, draws the curtain aside and does things in real people's lives. Those men, scholars and questioners by training, were able to go home saying, "There are plenty of mysteries in the universe. We only know bits and pieces. But this I know! The God of Israel is knowable because he chooses to be! And what we saw there speaks to us of limitless love."

I recently had a brief conversation with a priest, a friend of mine. I knew him fifteen years ago as a faithful believer in Jesus Christ who confidently preached the Gospel of God's love revealed fully and finally in Jesus. But as we talked, I was dismayed to hear him using a new vocabulary for God, describing the Almighty as "the Unknowable One", and implying that, because we don't know everything about God, then we need to think of Jesus as one image of divinity, to be appreciated alongside many divine disclosures, giving equal credence to the theology of other world religions. My heart sank, as I realized that my friend had apparently sold out to the culture that wants to re-mystify God, to deny any reliable knowledge of his nature. And, here, I believe, is the culture's agenda. If God is unclear, so are his moral standards! If we allow ourselves to generalize about God's nature, we provide ourselves with lots of flexibility on such things as human nature, and sin, and forgiveness, and on specific issues like sexual morality and evangelism.

Re-mystifying God leaves us by the bedside of a dying person saying, "It will be alright." And when the person asks, "How do you know?" the modern semi-skeptic says, "Well, we just believe that God loves us and will take care of us." The person asks, "Do you have any evidence?" "Well, the

evidence is unclear, but all people have some idea of heaven." And the dying one inquires, "But how can I know God will take me there?" The skeptic says, "We'll just pray for that." Beloved, I was sad for my priest friend's seemingly diminished faith, but sadder for those people to whom he will minister.

They'll never hear him give as clear an explanation of St. Paul's confident word to the church in Ephesus, a word about Paul's God-given stewardship of Grace. Paul wrote, "How the mystery was made known to me by revelation." (That's the same mystery the Wise Men celebrated — a God who discloses himself to all people in Jesus!) Paul wrote, "When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ." The mystery "not made known to the sons of men in other generations." That is, how the Gentiles (all people) are partakers of God's promise. Paul said, "My calling is to make all men see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God." (Notice it's a plan revealed, not a puzzle to be pondered.) A plan revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and confidence of access through our faith in him. Boldness! Confidence! Paul could say with certainty what Christians ever since then have said to each other in times of confusion and sadness. "But this I know! God is here! He has shown us himself, and he will prevail!"

St. Paul traveled the Mediterranean world with the same amazing good news. Under life's rough surface, God has created beauty and made it available in Jesus. "Your situation might be inexplicable to you," Paul said everywhere, "but it's not too hard, not too complicated, not too big for God!" The broken body of Jesus reveals the treasure, the truth of God's love deliberately disclosed for all who will believe it!

One of the songs we sing at Communion recognizes that there are many things about life and about God that are beyond his understanding, but in each case, he comes back to faith in the God who has revealed himself in Jesus

Christ. Epiphany is the manifestation, the showing forth of God's unchanging nature in the midst of a very uncertain and puzzling world. The good news for all of us who face hard situations — our own painful puzzles or the anguishing mysteries that cloud the lives of people we love. We can look squarely at these puzzles and claim for ourselves the boldness and confidence Jesus was born to bring. And when we comfort each other, we can weep and admit we can't explain the suffering. But with the confidence born of faith in Jesus, we can say, "But this I know! God is here! And he will do in you and for you better things than you can desire or pray for."

Here's the last stanza of that Communion song, with words and music in the public domain.

I cannot tell how all the lands shall worship,
When at His bidding every storm is stilled,
Or who can say how great the jubilation,
When all the hearts of men with love are filled.
But this I know, the skies will thrill with gladness,
And myriad, myriad human voices sing,
And earth to heaven, and heaven to earth will answer,
At last the Savior, Savior of the world is King!"

— The Rev. Rick Belser,
St. Michael's, Charleston,
South Carolina

• •

From a Reader in Indiana...

I am using my own envelope so that I can retain A Prayer for Hillspeak and pray this prayer daily.

God ever bless Hillspeak and all those whose hands, hearts, and talents prepare and distribute THE ANGLICAN DIGEST. How greatly this little publication has blessed the lives of others with whom I share its contents ... it does so much towards acquainting others with Anglican belief and minds to the unchangeable love of our Father God and the unspeakable sacrifice of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

My ever-grateful thanks

HOLIDAY CHEESE BALL RECIPE

2 - 8 oz. packages cream cheese, softened
1/4 cup powdered sugar
1 T. freshly grated orange rind
1 - 6 oz. package dried cranberries (reserve some for decoration)
1 - 15 oz. can crushed pineapple, well-drained
1 - 3 1/2 oz. can coconut (reserve some for decoration)
1 package gingersnaps

Mix softened cream cheese with powdered sugar. Add orange rind, then dried cranberries, then pineapple, then coconut, mixing well after each addition.

Shape into ball and wrap with plastic wrap or place in mold lined with plastic wrap. Chill. When ready to serve, unwrap and place on plate. Sprinkle reserved coconut on cheese ball and surround with dried cranberries.

Serve with gingersnaps. Enjoy!

– Dori Bisbey, St. Mark's, Cocoa, Florida



About the Cover

The Holy Family with Saint Anne and the Infant John the Baptist, by El Greco was painted in the late 16th century. His positioning of the Holy Infant in Mary's arms foreshadows the pieta – Mary holding the body of the Christ. In other versions, El Greco made Joseph appear older, reflecting a contemporary debate within the church.



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Tracts for our Times

THE HEART OF CHRISTIANITY

The very heart of Christianity is the Cross. Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, became human for the salvation and redemption of the world. That salvation and redemption is wrought in and through the passion, death, and resurrection of Christ. Jesus is incarnate, born of the Blessed Virgin Mary in order to die. No wonder the Gospel writers devote nearly a third of their Gospel account to the crucifixion. "By his wounds we are healed." The atonement embraces many meanings and its purpose so vast that no one teaching can exhaust its meaning. "He gave his life a ransom for many." "God so loved the world that he gave ..." And this giving is both incarnation and atonement. Given to be born, given to die "for us, and for our salvation."

Anglicans tend to emphasize the incarnation so much, that that doctrine too may become distorted, misused, and misunderstood. We need to focus more on the cross, his sacrificial death, for that is the purpose and reason for his holy incarnation. Even at Christmas, there looms over the creche a shadow, a cross shaped shadow, which is his destiny, to die to the sins of the world. For without the shedding of blood, there is no redemption, no salvation, no new heaven and earth. The cross calls us to discipleship, to share in its redeeming purpose and power, for the way to glory and victory, is calvary. When a person is converted, surrendered, and enters into Christ's obedience, there is a new person, by water and blood. The church needs to recover its emphasis on the newness of life through penitence and absolution. The church needs to emphasize again the saving power of the paschal mystery which is indeed the meaning of Christian baptism, the living out of the principle of life through death. When one is touched by the living God, there is a change, a new attitude, a new life style, a new

and spirit filled way of being and acting. Once again the church needs to emphasize conversion, righteousness, holiness.

There was back in the '50s and '60s a well known Episcopal lay evangelist, Gert Behanna. Gert was raised in an affluent environment and spent much of her life as an agnostic and alcoholic. But when Gert was converted, she became a new person, and a tremendous witness for Christ. One day a long time friend met her, and exclaimed, "My God, Gert, what has happened to you?!" And Gert Behanna replied, "God has happened to me!" Surely that is conversion, God happens in one's life, and the change is more than noticeable. Conversion leads to righteousness and wholeness. The new person in Christ becomes as Augustine said, "A vehicle of the divine charity." The new person in Christ is becoming Christ-like, or as Paul said, "growing into the fulness of the stature of Christ." Conversion leads to a process of daily taking up the cross, daily discipleship, daily growing and increasing in the Holy Spirit more and more. The sacraments nourish and feed the hungry soul.

It is dangerous to fall into the hands of the living God, but His are the hands of unconditional love, which is both lavish and demanding. The demand is the obedience, and the changed person rejoices that God is happening within, for He makes all things new. The Church too is called to repentance, conversion, surrender, and obedience.

The cross confronts us with our sins, our brokenness, our disobedience and our arrogance. Communities and persons need to be broken for order to be redeemed, restored, reformed, renewed. Conversion and obedience means a radical change, a change from one's desire to be holy, and a change because the Lord makes all things new. The pattern of Christian living is this eucharistic, for all of life is offered and taken, blessed and set apart, broken, and given. The difficult part is the

breaking, but it is the cross through which we share God's glory. As in baptism one must be plunged into the depths, and raise in the risen Lord, so in the eucharist, we share in the brokenness in order to enter into the newness and unity of righteous and holy living.



– The Rev. Dr. Richard Cornish Martin, SSC, Durham, North Carolina

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ALIENS IN ADORATION

"Magi from the East come to Jerusalem" Matthew 2:1-12

As a young boy of ten years, I participated in my first procession of the Magi. I don't remember which king I represented, but I do remember what a motley crew we were. We looked anything but "kingly." Our trio seemed like misfits there at that holy manger site.

Yet in reflecting back on that moment, I am more and more convinced that our misfit nature would be right at home in Matthew's story of Magi, star, stable and kingly gifts. For Matthew's is the story of strangers, misfits, the "others", of aliens in adoration.

In Martin Luther's portrayal of this scene, the wise men were perplexed when they arrived in Jerusalem after their long journey. They expected to find torches lit, trumpets blowing, dancing in the streets, in celebration of the newborn king. The perplexed kings followed the light to a dark abode carved

out of rock only to find a peasant couple with their baby. There they cast all misgivings of common sense, fell down and worshiped the child and presented to him their costly gifts.

Matthew introduces a troubling question for his first Jewish readers and for us. If Jesus is so magnetic to outsiders and aliens and is so bonded to them, where do we who are so typical, so normal, and so dominant fit? Can we who are dominant call Jesus Christ the Lord of our lives in the same fashion as the magi and the other outsiders?

We need to look carefully at some pivotal questions. The first being, who responded to Jesus' call to lead his movement? Those first followers were not the rich young rulers, but fishermen and tax collectors. Who did Jesus spend his time with? The sinners, the needy, the ill. Who were the most important people? The children, not the religious leaders. Whom did he condemn? The Galilean towns with their well-established houses of worship.

The gospel writer Matthew brings us to the manger, and we are uncomfortable because we notice that we are not outcasts, misfits, aliens, or strangers. We who are so "in" look at Jesus and those tightly bound to him and we feel so "out."

Yet, there comes to each of us those moments when we discover that perhaps we too are strangers, aliens who come to adore Jesus Christ as Lord of our lives.

We may have more in common with those strangers and outcasts who visited that first manger scene than we think. If we see them as being out of sorts and different from the rest of society, perhaps we, too, have now taken on that identity in the eyes of our culture. After all, in becoming a Christian we have embraced a vision completely at odds with the message being conveyed by the dominant culture. We live today in a country that

is largely hostile to our Christian values.

I learned something about the alien culture a few years ago while serving a church in the Chicago area. I have a dear friend from Ghana who is rector of a black congregation on the south side of Chicago. One Sunday we decided to do a pulpit exchange. He came to my parish, an upper middle-class community, and I went to his parish. While there I experienced a very vibrant and loving community of worshippers. They showed a genuine love for the Lord. After the last service, at a luncheon, I shared my observation with a warden. He said to me in a very sincere voice, "When you are part of a culture that is easily marginalized, Jesus becomes a very powerful factor in our lives." And now, as I stand before the manger as an alien, my Christian values easily discounted by our society, I know the power of that little child in the manger, and understand why the magi showed such adoration.

The yearly visitation to the manger is a good thing for us. As we stand there together with all those who may seem like strangers and outcasts, we see that we are at one with them. For we, too, who proclaim in unison with the company of aliens, "Jesus Christ, Lord of our lives, how we adore you!", discover the abundant grace of God, the renewing sense of purpose, and the knowledge that all is right deep within us. We who know ourselves to be temporary aliens in this place come to the One who represents home, our only true security.

– The Rev. Dr. Craig Kallio,
St. Stephen's,
Oak Ridge, Tennessee

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Consecration of the Bishop of Durham

"It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. ...We will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word." (Acts 6:4)

So the apostles spoke, defining their own wholly important and not to be neglected ministry over against the other ministry of the church, also wholly important and not to be neglected, the ministry of the deacons. Ministry has a twofold shape, and many of us engaged in ministry are constantly aware of the fact as we experience a kind of tug-of-war on our attention. Our traditional threefold pattern, of bishops, priests and deacons grows out of this twofold pattern. The bishop, as Hooker quaintly put it, is entrusted with a "chiefty in government" among those who minister the word and sacrament. He is to guide their ministry and take responsibility for it. So it is that the ministry for which we have come to present Tom Wright to the Archbishop today.

Why did the pastors that Jesus charged to "tend my sheep" insist on exercising their pastoral rule by prayer and the word? Why not decision-making? How could they simply leave the burden of church's family life to the deacons to administer, and, as it could seem, turn their backs on practicalities? It is because they knew that the church of Jesus Christ lives upon the twofold word that God has authorized: the word of prayer and the word of doctrine, the speech of man to God, and the speech of God to man.

For God's word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. No practical decision can be quite that. Practical decisions are particular, and always ambiguous: they make perfect sense here and now, but not necessarily there and then. But to speak the word of Christ is to shed the light that others may decide by; it provides the coherent matrix for all decisions.

Bishops cannot escape the making of decisions. But it is precisely not to authorize decision-making that we bring Tom here for consecration today. What we have in view is the special work of a bishop, the work of prayer and doctrine.



The interesting thing about the ministry of prayer and doctrine is that although it seems to be two different ministries, its two aspects keep on melting into one. To pray for the congregation in the congregation, to pray just the right thing that the congregation needs to pray, and not to pray for all the things the congregation thinks about a little too much, what greater work of teaching could there be than that? To teach just what the faithful need to understand at this point, to lay out God's promise before them for their comfort. What more powerful way of interceding could there be, pleading with God that they may be ready for the day of his coming?

That two-way speech, God to man and man to God, is authorized and authoritative. This God who has spoken to us and bidden us believe in him, bids us speak to him. His speech to us carries the whole authority of the divine being; our speech to him carries the authority of his saving purpose for us. In serving this two-way speech, the bishop has authority. No other authority could any bishop, or indeed any apostle, have than this. No other authority can even be imagined in Christ's church, for any other authority would be an imposition, unchurching the church by tyrannizing over its Gospel freedom. But this authority guarantees the Gospel freedom of the community, for through it God enables us to call on him and serve him without fear.

The bishop, though not

without legal powers, needs to be able to call upon an authority with deeper springs than any statutory power. He needs an authority that comes straight from the presence and working of God the Holy Spirit in our midst. His is an altogether less predictable, more exposed role. Nobody can say in advance, when he opens his mouth, whether we shall hear the word of God and obey it.

But when that happens, deep speaks to deep. The words he brings us carry authority because we recognize our own authority there, the authority that God has given us to be his church — safeguarded, protected, secured by God's promise. In the bishop's ministry we are brought alive to grasp hold of our own ministries together in Christ's body. Our prayer for Tom today, then, is also a prayer for ourselves: "Quicken us, according to thy word!"

Let us apply this directly to the role of the bishop in controversy. God has not promised us that there will be no controversy in the church. When it arises we should not dismiss it impatiently as an aberration, caused solely by the dullness of heart and dimness of wit of those who don't see things from the right point of view. "There must be divisions among you," St. Paul tells us, "in order that those who are genuine may be recognized" (1 Cor. 11:19). We must recognize God's will in this, and accept the challenge. The apostles were responding to controversy in the institution of the deacons; and in their response they not only talked about their ministry of prayer and teaching, they exercised it. They taught and they prayed: taught about the shape of ministry, prayed for those whose ministry was to be different from their own. In controversy what is needed is precisely the ministry of prayer and the word.

It is, of course, tempting to approach it in a different way. A decision is taken, which upsets people. It is not

in being upset, that we go wrong, but in what we do next. We challenge the decision, we try to overthrow it. And then, predictably, those who were not upset before become upset, and try to frustrate us. Everyone is sure they have the last word to speak on how that decision should have been made, or should be re-made. The decibel level increases. But it was not the decision that everyone should have been concentrating on. It was the doctrine.

"Doctrine divides, service unites" an earlier generation used to say, getting it exactly the wrong way round. Very busy people doing important and valuable things always get across one another. Only the word can hold them together, teach them to see their different tasks coherently as facets in the many-angled ministry of Christ's people. And doctrine unites at any rate when it is ministered concretely, as the good shepherd's word to his flock in its moment of crisis; for "the sheep hear his voice and the sheep follow him" (John 10:3f.) The church needs episcopal authority not to impose decisions or change decisions, but to draw the flock together, speaking the words of Christ as they bear on the point at issue. It is the riskiest and the greatest of all ventures of authority, but the one that most attests the nature of the church.

The bishop's teaching is not simply wit and wisdom, promulgating new and surprising ideas, being abreast with the latest research, though none of these do any harm. It is the articulation of God's word to those in need, offered to believers everywhere. There is more to be heard from Scripture and Christian wisdom than the opinions of theologians and scholars. There is the voice of Jesus himself, speaking to us as we call upon him today. And he says to us, as he says to Tom: "Follow me!" (Jn. 21:19)

– The Rev. Canon Professor Oliver O'Donovan, York Minister

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